

[L. A. Rollins]

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[?] [????]

Federal Writers' project

F. W. Kaul—L. A. Rollins

[?], Nebraska.

Source:

[?] related to F W Kaul by L. A. Rollins,

1126 [West?] 6th St., Hastings, Nebraska. [????]

My father opened for retail business in 1888 in Hastings, Nebraska, calling it "The Fair Store" and stock consisted of graniteware, tinware, stoneware, [?], glassware, toys at Xmas, marbles, tops, kites, croket sets, baseball gloves, etc., as the season opened. Later Furniture, Floor Coverings, and Phonographs were added and the store moved to larger quarters. Name changed to the [??] Rollins Fair Store, then changed to the Rollins Furniture Co., until sold in [1924?].

The working [?] were so different in those days, I mean especially in getting lined up and started. I was in school of course, but from around 10 years and up, I earned my spending money, vacation trips and extras by working after school, Saturdays [??] large part of the time. A little more about the store in those days as fitting in with the [wedding?] customs. My first recollection is when [?] was a single room, full basement and a deck built half way across to [?] floor. The store was onehalf block long. On one side of [?] floor high on shelving ran the full length of the room and I'll never forget that top shelf which was about

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a foot wide. The entire length was devoted to bedroom toilet sets, consisting usually of two jars with covers, a large wash bowl and pitcher, a soap dish with cover, a pitcher for drinking water and two tumblers. C15 - 2/27/41 - Nebraska

[All?] in matched sets in fancy crockery of every imaginable color and design. They sold from 3.50 to 35.00. These were immense sellers and whoever heard of a bride in those days who didn't have a bright colored matched set in the guest chamber at least. [?] anyway once a month this great long shelf had to be thoroughly dusted and each piece rearranged. That also by the way was Dad's checking system, to see that I done a good job. 2

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On the floor in front of this shelving were long [??] every kind of as oil lamp style. Overhead hung the hanging lamps. Also there were two kitchen bracket lamps, small bedroom lamps, night lamps, large reading table lamps and then the fancy table and elaborate hanging lamps. Some in glass but mostly in bright colored china with [??????] hanging to 5 inches around [?????] by the hundreds and were one of the first things a bride would select at the store unless she had received several at the wedding.

In front of the shelves were tables covered with fancy china and fancy glassware. It was a very [?] time for a bride's church, Sunday school, school [?????] together and purchase matched dinnerware set, then in fancy glass usually [?] heavy and thick with wide gold bands, a water set, 1 berry set, then a sugar, creamer, [?] dish and covered butter dish all to match. Then so many pieces of fancy handpainted china, salad bowls, fruit bowls, [?] and pickle trays, odd shaped dishes and of course several fancy vase and statues. [?] bit of this had been purchased before the wedding, [???], great [??] completely round out the assortment would be bought when [bride and groom were in the ?] store selecting the outfit of furniture, etc., as it was called for the new home.

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The wedding usually took place in the bride's home or the church. The parents [????] either retiring and [??????] groom's [?????] nearly 16 or renting one for them. The wedding, then the big [Dinner?], went to town. The first stop was at the [picture gallery?]. picture must be had in the wedding [?], bridal wreath and all. Usually a crowd with them, then to our store for the outfit of furniture, etc. Bride and groom usually [?????] both sides doing nearly all the selecting and deciding.

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The crowd would come in the store and each had a large sack of rice and if that store wouldn't be a mess. Rice is very slippery and my father had me [?] a broom constantly sweeping.

When I got thru with this, I had another sweeping job about closing time which in those days was when the customer got thru. A brother or brothers of the bride or groom would drive a hay [rack?] up to the side of the store. The [?] would be bedded down with clean straw. The farmers hauled all their purchases in those days. The store force would be busy packing and wrapping, the brothers would do most of the loading and the outfit of furniture, etc., went to the new home on the wedding day and the wedding party crowd went along and helped in fact staid until all the furnishings were in the new home. So many time when I would be cleaning up the loose straw from the walk, there would be a dozen or more men in a wagon behind the hay rack and there too would be the groom and they certainly would tease and try to get his goat and temper in about every possible way. The bride would follow in a carriage usually with several of her girl friends. The whole crowd would be so jolly and just seemed to be having the best time ever.

And how different the furniture then as compared to today for example the guest chamber. There just had to be one in those days. Ingrain carpet of big pattern, a bureau with long mirror and drawers at the sides and below the mirror, the commode, chiffonier, wood or

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brass bed, chair and a couple of bedroom rockers at least and most important of all a fancy toilet set.

Those weddings were planned weeks, even months ahead, every detail looked [?] for from the wedding to the house all furnished so often done completely before the wedding day ended.”

Federal Writers' Project,

[??] Kaul—L A Rollins,

Hastings, Nebraska.

Source:

As related to F W Kaul by L A Rollins,

1126 West 6th St., Hastings, Nebraska. Picnics on the Blue River

“Along about 1908, and for several years after, our school, Sunday school, Y M C A and various clubs, often during the warm months rented a hayrack and rode to the Blue River, 10 miles south of Hastings, Nebraska for a days outing.

We usually met at a central location around 5 AM, then the teacher would call the roll and each had to show himself for if you weren't there some other kid would yell “Present” as they would all be so impatient to get started.

The first and only stop was the half way house, known as Legler's Grove. Here we bought a bottle of strawberry or cream pop and a box of Cracker Jack. Lagler's was a timber claim homestead operated by two brothers. At their little shed stand near the road and in addition to the two kinds of pop and Cracker Jacks about all they stocked was “Kiss-Me” gum. Those items were the big popular demand around here then.

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Then on to the river. Singing all the time over and over all the school, church and popular songs anyone would start a lead on. Then on arrival at the river, the race to see who went swimming or wading first, renting the boats, the hunt for polywogs, turtles, butterflys, fish, bright colored stones, etc., to bring home. In the summer too, it was gather choke cherries, wild grapes and wild plums. Then a big early dinner under the trees. Potato salad, ham sandwiches, hard boiled eggs, pickles, cake and literally gallons and gallons of pink colored lemonade. Homemade ice cream.

cleanup lunch around 4 o'clock, a bushel [???] opened to eat on the way home. Singing all the way home, getting home dead tired and plenty dirty but ready to go again anytime on short notice."